

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Farm Service Agency
967 Illinois Ave, Suite 2
Bangor, ME 04401

ME NOTICE GRP-4

For: FSA State and County Offices

FY 2011 Grasslands Reserve Program (GRP)

Approved by: DONOVAN E. TODD III, State Executive Director

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1. Background

Signup for the Grassland Reserve Program began in June 2009 and continues through 2012.

To implement the Grassland Reserve Program during fiscal year 2011, Maine received an allocation of \$196,523. Of the funds allocated, \$78,609 is available for GRP rental agreements and \$117,914 is available for easements.

2. Purpose

This notice provides general information and guidance on accepting applications for FY 2011.

The Grassland Reserve Program is jointly administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The following information can be found at <http://www.me.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/GRP.html>

FY 11 GRP Pre-Application Tool
FY 11 GRP Application Checklist
FY 11 GRP Eligible Practice Payment Schedule
FY 11 GRP Policy
FY 11 GRP Ranking
FY 11 GRP Rental Rates
FY 11 Proposed GRP Easement Geographical Area Rate Caps and Area Map

Disposal Date
April 30, 2011

Distribution
County Offices

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A Priority Enrollment

Enrollment will emphasize the following:

- 2011 Expiring Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage
- 2009 and 2010 Recently Expired CRP acreage still under grass cover

B Accepting Applications and Processing

County FSA Offices shall work with NRCS and discuss GRP provisions with producers. Interested landowners shall file an application on an AD-1153, and applications may be accepted by either FSA or NRCS.

- Applications may be accepted through January 7, 2011
- 10, 15, and 20-year Rental Agreements and Permanent Easements will be available
- Thirty-year Easements and thirty-year Rental Agreements are not available for the 2010 GRP enrollment
- All GRP funds must be obligated (contracts approved) by July 1, 2011
- The ranking deadline is February 1, 2011

New producers will need to be added to SCIMS according to 1-CM, and a Farm Record created according to 3-CM

Applications accepted by local NRCS offices will be provided to County FSA Offices at least once weekly. FSA will need to enter these applications in the automated system and follow-up with the producer to ensure the above information is obtained.

C AD-1153 Applications Received

On a weekly basis, CED's shall provide their local NRCS Office the original signed, dated, and verified AD-1153 Application Received Report (Report EED61 0-R001).

Print this report from the SYS/36 Conservation Maine Menu by the following menu options:

- Option 7, CCC Processing Menu
- Option 6, AD-1153 GRP Application Menu
- Option 6, AD-1153 Reports/Forms Menu
- Option 1, AD-1153 Applications Received

D GRP Payments

Landowners who offer and are accepted for permanent easements will receive payment based on the lowest amount of either:

- The geographical cap as determined by NRCS, OR
- The offered amount from landowner

Approved rental agreement participants will receive not more than 75 percent of the grazing value (as determined by FSA) in an annual payment for the length of the contract. Currently these rates are the 2003 GRP per acre rental rates. However, if these rates are updated, the producer will receive the 2011 published rate.

E Program Announcement

The local FSA and NRCS shall coordinate announcement of the 2011 GRP. A press release will be provided to the County Office for immediate distribution.

F Concurrence and Distribution

This notice has the concurrence of the Maine States NRCS Office. Please provide a copy of this notice to the local NRCS DC.

MAINE GRASSLAND RESERVE PROGRAM (GRP): STEP BY STEP PROCESS

APPLICATION PHASE		
Step	WHO	DOES WHAT
#1	NRCS District Conservationist and FSA	NRCS and FSA shall Coordinate at the local level to publicize the GRP program through local media and/or newsletters
#2	Producer	Expresses their interest in GRP at the local USDA Service Center. Either FSA or NRCS may accept offers for GRP enrollment on form AD-1153
#3a	FSA (apps rec'd by FSA)	<p>Before recording AD-1153 applications in the sys/36, FSA County Offices shall access the ccc County Eligibility Table according to 2-CONSV (Rev.2) paragraph 11-12 and activate GRP fund codes 235001/2010 and 235002/2010 by setting the eligibility status to "Y".</p> <p>For each producer interested in GRP:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Work with interested GRP applicant and inform them of GRP program provisions. (2) Complete automated AD-1153 application in the sys/36 software. Instructions on completing the automated AD-1153 can be found in FSA National Directive 2-CONSV (Rev. 1) Paragraphs 27 and 76. County offices shall utilize fund code 235001/2010 for GRP rental contract applications and fund code 235002/2010 for GRP easement applications. (3) Have producer indicate on a current map the areas being offered for enrollment (4) Have the producer complete items 3, 4, and 5 on the AD-1153 and sign in item 6. (5) Forward the completed AD-1153, along with the map indicating the offered GRP acreage, to NRCS within 2 working days. <p>For each manual AD-1153 received from NRCS:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Complete the automated AD-1153 application in the sys/36 software according to step (2) above. (2) Print the automated AD-1153 and attach to manual AD-1153 and return to NRCS within 2 working days.
#3b	NRCS District Conservationist (apps rec'd by NRCS)	<p>For Each producer interested in GRP:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Work with interested GRP applicant and inform them of GRP program provisions. (2) Complete a manual AD-1153 application ensuring that items A-D are completed. (3) Have the producer indicate on a current map the areas being offered for enrollment. (4) Have the producer complete items 3, 4, and 5 on the AD-1153 and sign in item 6. (5) Forward the manual AD-1153 to FSA within two working days for data loading into the automated AD-1153 system.
#4	NRCS District Conservationist for Designee	<p>For each AD-1153 and map received:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Contact the producer to set up a Field Visit for completion of GRP Maine Ranking form. (2) Complete site visit and GRP Maine Ranking form and have producer sign and date the ranking form. (3) As soon as possible: Relay the applicant name, county, application type (rental/easement), ranking score, and total cost to the State Office for data entry into the GRP Summary spreadsheet.
#5	NRCS State Office	<p>For each completed ranking: By COB January 12, 2011. E-mail the GRP summary spreadsheet to Bill Yamartino.</p>
#6	NRCS and FSA State Office	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) By COB February 2, 2011, applications will be selected for funding based on ranking score by application type (rental vs easement). (2) Notifies all local FSA and NRCS offices with GRP applications submitted of funding decisions by February 2, 2011
#7	NRCS District Conservationist and FSA	GRP is available as a continuous signup. FSA and NRCS will continue to accept GRP applications on an AD-1153 as outlined in Step #s 1 through 3 above

GRP process flowchart, 11/26/10

FSA= local FSA office; Producer=Producer eligible to submit a GRP offer

